

C. Remarks

The claims are 181-194, with claims 181 and 188 being independent. Claims 147, 152-157, 179 and 180 have been cancelled. New claims 181-194 have been added. Specifically, claim 181 corresponds to claim 179 rewritten in independent form, with claims 182-187 corresponding to claims 152-157 rewritten to depend from claim 181. Claim 188 corresponds to claim 180 rewritten in independent form, with claims 189-194 corresponding to claims 152-157 rewritten to depend from claim 188. Accordingly, no new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the present claims is expressly requested.

Initially, Applicants note that Form PTOL-413, which was attached to the Office Action, is believed to be for summarizing interviews conducted with Applicants and their representatives, not for conferences conducted solely between the employees of the Patent Office. Accordingly, since there was no interview conducted with Applicants or their representatives, there is no requirement to submit a formal written reply mentioned on the PTOL-413 form.

As another formal matter, Applicants yet again respectfully request that the Examiner initial and return PTO-1449 forms, which were submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on August 22, 2001, to indicate that the documents cited therein have been considered.

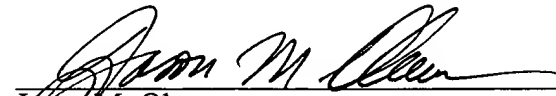
Claims 147 and 152-156 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by JP 59-157973 (Nawa). Claim 157 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from Nawa.

Without acquiescence, and solely to expedite prosecution, Applicants have cancelled the above-mentioned rejected claims. Accordingly, this rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

The only claims remaining in the application are those including the features of claim 179 or 180, which the Examiner deemed allowable. Wherefore, expedient allowance of these claims and passage of the application to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


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